

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in the above-identified application. In the non-final Office Action dated September 21, 2007, the Examiner rejected claims 1-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Lee, et al.* (U.S. 7,072,896) (“*Lee*”). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and address the Examiner’s disposition below.

Independent claims 1, 6, 11, and 16, each as amended, each claim subject matter relating to managing a plurality of nodes in a layered hierarchically organized database. A subset of the nodes are accessed in response to a client request. One or more state attributes associated with the nodes are modified to control merging and updating of layers to a resulting layered hierarchical database in response to the client request. The one or more state attributes indicates a last action taken on a corresponding data element. The nodes are managed using the state attributes, including at least one of overriding a default value, resetting an overridden value back to the default value, and updating the default value.

This is clearly unlike *Lee*, which fails to disclose or suggest managing a node using a state attribute by one of overriding a default value, resetting an overridden value back to the default value, and updating the default value. This subject matter is simply not discussed in *Lee*. Therefore, for at least these reasons, *Lee* fails to disclose or suggest claims 1, 6, 11, and 16.

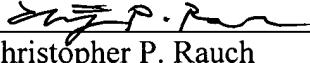
Claims 2-5, 7-10, 12-15, and 17-24 depend directly or indirectly from claims 1, 6, 11, or 16 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons that claims 1, 6, 11, and 16 are allowable.

Applicants respectfully submit the rejection has been overcome and request that it be withdrawn.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submits that all claims are allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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